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"Speaking of Women!"

Text: Genesis 1:27,28a, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them."

I read somewhere once that psychiatrists or psychologists could analyze a person, not only by the things he could reveal about himself. But also, by his eating habits and his sleeping habits, and his reading habits. I am sure any of those fellows would have a field day not so much with my eating and sleeping habits, but with my reading habits. I am what would probably be called an inveterate late reader. By this I mean that I hardly ever get around to reading the latest issue of Readers Digest, or Newsweek, or even the newspaper. In our living room beside my chair you will almost always find the Sunday comics, from several weeks ago. They lie there and patiently await the time when I will ~~read~~ ~~the~~ get around to them.

Now all of this is leading up to the fact that I was reading the latest edition of the United Church of Christ magazine, which is called A.D. By the latest, at least for me, I mean the June issue. But in this ~~magazine~~ magazine, I read first a review of a religious movie, and then I read an article about a woman who is now an ordained minister. ~~And then I read the letters to the editor in which there were several about an article that appeared in the April issue. I checked back through the issues I still must read, and I found January, February, March, and May, but no April. So I can only quote from the letters to the editor.~~ Now what all of this roundabout introduction is leading up to, is that these ~~2~~ things are tied together in a somewhat similar pattern. At least I believe they are, and I would like to share this with you this evening.

First, I should perhaps strive to find out just where I stand, while speaking to this wonderful group, so permit me to ask you a few questions. How many of you ladies here are behind the womens liberation

movement 100%? By this I mean, how many of you support all that it is doing and are not against anything that it does?

Alright, now how many of you support the womens liberation movement with some reservations? In other words, how many of you think it has some good points, but it also has some bad ones?

Fine, now how many of you are against it altogether? In other words, how many of you feel it is doing the image of womanhood a disservice and you are against it for that reason?

Now I think I know how you stand, but this does not mean that I am going to alter my thinking just to suit the majority here. I am sure based on past experience with womens groups, that you will hear me out and be fair in your judgement of what I may say.

The article I read about a movie review, was about a picture entitled, "Brother Sun, Sister Moon." This picture should be coming around this area soon, and it is the story of St. Francis of Assisi. But it is also the story of a woman named St. Clare. This girl was born <sup>received the best education</sup> into a noble family, and at the age of 16 was promised as a wife to a knight, whom she refused to marry. She instead focused her attention on caring for lepers and orphans. The story of her life is intertwined with that of St. Francis, because they were each striving to do the same thing and were attracted to each other by their desire to be servants to others, Please note that they were not girl and boyfriend, but just fellow brother and sister seeking to be of assistance to those in need.

Pope Alexander IV called her, "The new woman who poured forth a fountain of living water to thirsty souls."

The article about the woman who is now an ordained minister tells of a woman who has gone from a suburban housewife to associate pastor of a church near Los Angeles California. The article states that 25 years ago she was ready to give up teaching Sunday School, because of the Biblical way the lessons were presented. She came close to leaving

the church altogether. Because of the kindness of a minister following the death of her 2 month old baby she again became a part of the church, but was still unable to accept the Bible stories literally. The one story she mentioned was Moses and the burning bush.

Now what we have here is a contrast in viewpoints. On the one hand we have a woman of nobility, who accepted the simple uncluttered literal interpretation of the Bible. While on the other hand we have a woman who is educated and does not want to be bothered by things that cannot be explained.

Although these two women lived approximately 800 years apart from one another, they are a study in what is transpiring today in the world of womanhood. We see on all sides of us a conflict between those who would change the status of women completely, and their methods border on doing away with all of the old things and putting women completely free and equal in all respects to men. Now much of this is good, and believe me it is for the better. But looking at it from the male point of view, I find much of it rather disgusting.

I still like to think of women as being something special. I still like to think of them as being capable of being that beautiful creation that God made, that is definitely distinct, and separate from the creation known as male. This does not mean that I feel men are superior to women, or that women are stupid and dumb. It merely means that for me women hold a special place and a special function in our society, and when they overstep these bounds they cease to be women.

I for one do not care to think of women as being truck drivers, and stevedores, and common laborers. I believe they are doing a grave disservice to their image. But on the other hand I deplore that women have worked in many areas in direct competition with men, and are paid far less than the men, simply because they are women. So you see there are areas of improvement that the women must and should fight for.

The woman who has entered the ministry at a later period of her life, can be compared to those women who seek to overthrow all that has been held ~~true and~~ true and right for women. Now mind I am not judging this woman, I am merely making the observation that her thinking about the Bible ~~being unacceptable because stories such as Moses and the burning bush cannot be explained~~ has led to much of the unrest and lawlessness that is prevalent in our society today. Instead of striving to tear down our morals and our ~~national~~ national belief in God and the Bible, this woman would do ~~well~~ more for womanhood if she stood up and fought against the immorality and disease that is rampant in our society today.

Instead of saying that she cannot believe in the literal burning of a bush and other stories in the Bible, she would do much more good if she came out against the spiritual decline in our nation, and in the moral decay of our youth by the use of all sorts of drugs.

Now all of this brings us to the part that many other women are playing in our society. This would apply to groups such as this. Women still must be the stabilizers in our society. They must still be the ones who can still exert a great influence from the sidelines. By this I mean that the image of a woman being weak and ineffectual and relegated to the role of a 2nd class citizen is mostly bunk. If the truth were ever known, it would astound the entire world to find out that more strings are pulled behind the scenes by women, and these strings being pulled, bring about the decisions that are reached in the halls of legislation, and in the board rooms of corporations.

Someone once said, that behind every great man, stands a woman, and he was right. But he also should have added that not only behind every great man, but behind almost every man stands a woman. I know that in my life it has been 1st a wonderful and loving mother, and for the last 22 years it has been a loving, devoted wife. And were it not for

these two women, I would not be standing here addressing you this evening.

But there is one further thought I would like to share with you along these lines. With all of this talk of women's lib, and men and women exchanging roles in society, I still firmly believe the old cliché, "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." We need just look at our society and see the results that have come about because women have been persuaded by some kook like Benjamin Spock that they were raising their children all wrong. I have a nephew and two nieces that were raised along the lines of Spock's book, and they haven't turned out completely well.

So my advice to ~~women~~ women in this group, and to women of the nation and even of the world, is, "Be women. Don't try to be men. Be feminine, be what God meant you to be. And if you are true to your sex, you will always be one of the most stabilizing forces that can be found in our society.

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created Him; male and female He created them. And God blessed them." This shows there is distinct difference between male and female. And we should each thank God for that difference, because it takes both male and female to run anything. So be proud of being women and God will direct your paths.